

Des News 29 May 1965

Heber Makes A Final Effort

Funds will be solicited and meetings held over the Memorial Day weekend in a final effort to save the Wasatch Stake Tabernacle in Heber City.

The First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints decided last week to raze the historic old building and erect a new ward chapel and stake center on the site. A citizens committee which had been working the past year to have the building failed to raise the necessary funds.

FINAL EFFORT

The final last-ditch effort to raise the \$45,000 needed to buy a new site will be made by the Heber committee and the Utah Historical Society.

Solicitations will be made at the Heber City Cemetery during the holiday weekend.

This will be followed by a door-to-door canvass of Wasatch, Salt Lake and Utah County residents, according to Don Barker,

chairman of the Heber committee.

Contributions may also be mailed to "Save the Tabernacle Fund," First Security Bank, Heber City. If the project is not successful, all money will be returned to the donors, Mr. Barker said.

Grant Iverson, president of the Utah Historical Society, said a big factor in saving the building will be the attitude of residents of Heber City.

It is felt the building has tremendous potential as a cultural and historical center.

PLAN MEETING

A meeting will be held Sunday at 3 p.m. at the Historical Society, 63 E. South Temple, to discuss plans for use of the building and for raising funds.

A second meeting is scheduled at the Memorial Hall, 49 E. 1st North, in Heber Monday at 3 p.m. to coordinate activities of all groups working on the project.

Tabernacle Drive Begins

Des. News 1 June 1965

By JUNE WHEELER
Deseret News Correspondent

HEBER CITY—"We can save the Tabernacle," Don Barker stated at a meeting here Monday in the Memorial Building.

Mr. Barker, chairman of the Save the Tabernacle Committee, said that in order to do this a house-to-house canvass must be made in Wasatch County. Money was also solicited at the Heber City Cemetery during the two-day Memorial holiday.

He also said committees were organized in Salt Lake City and Provo to help with the campaign to preserve the Wasatch Stake

Tabernacle, which now is scheduled to be razed for a new stake center.

A brochure is being prepared and will be ready for distribution the latter part of the week. Mr. Barker asked those at the meeting to prepare a mailing of all friends and relatives who might be interested in saving the Tabernacle.

Two engineers, Fred Markham and George Cannon Young, will be in Heber City Tuesday to reappraise the Tabernacle and amusement hall and to make recommendations as to restoration costs.

A report will then be made to the General Authorities of The

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Church recently announced its decision to raze the Tabernacle and build a new ward and stake hall on the site.

Preservation of the Tabernacle and grounds is the first consideration of the group, but proper utilization of it is of equal importance. It was suggested at the meeting that a cultural center be made of the site.

The Tabernacle would be used for drama and musical presentations and the amusement hall as an art gallery. Its location on Main St. and U.S. Highway makes it an ideal tourist attraction.

Abram Hatch Jr., 87-year-old grandson of Abram Hatch Sr., first president of the Wasatch Stake, and three other great-grandsons, Garn, Joe and Boyd Hatch, attended the meeting to help spearhead the final drive.

Dr. Bill Jordan of the University of Utah, David Dalton of the music department of the Brigham Young University, and Ferrin Whitaker, local artist, all expressed their views on the possibility of the cultural utilization of the historic site.

Rodello Hunter, a native Heberite and author of a recently published book on Heber Valley, "A House of Many Rooms," also spoke.

SCENE TODAY

Heber Hall

Drive Gains

Des News 3 June '65

By TED CANNON

The campaign to save the historic Wasatch Stake Tabernacle in Heber from the wreckers' sledges goes on apace, with the day of doom drawing nearer, and still a long way to go in the matter of raising funds. But the committee, headed by Don Barker, is undaunted, and aided by such devoted crusaders as Garn Hatch and Dr. Bill Jordan, they're stirring up a lot of enthusiasm and support for the cause.

There'll be a committee meeting in Provo tonight, to be followed at a later date by a mass meeting there, and plans are going forward for a series of fund-raising entertainments—theatricals, concerts, etc.—to be held in Heber on Wednesday evenings.

One of the big problems on the money end is that members of the stake and wards concerned will have to dig deep for funds for the new Church structure to take the place of the old building, and there's a limit to how much a body can give.

Which means that most of the forty thousand or so needed to save the structure must come from outsiders—former residents and others interested in preserving a picturesque landmark and a choice example of pioneer architecture and craftsmanship.

Also, it would seem reasonable to expect too that public agencies—the city and county, the state and maybe even the federal government—could pony up some cash for such a worthy purpose.

Anyway, more power to the committee, which advises that contributions may be sent to "Save the Tabernacle Committee," care of First Security Bank, Heber, and in the event the drive fails (heaven forbid!) they'll be refunded to the donors.

Move Revealed By Heber Council Toward Saving Stake Tabernacle

The Heber City Council has passed a motion to sell a certain tract of land and apply the proceeds toward restoration of the historic Heber Tabernacle—and to accept title and responsibility for the property if it can be saved.

This was revealed to a group of interested Provo citizens this week by Garn Hatch, Salt Lake City civil engineer and a leader in the campaign to save the stately Heber edifice from destruction. Mr. Hatch is the great-grandson of Abram Hatch, Wasatch Stake president when the tabernacle was built in the late 1880s.

Most Promising

The move by the Heber City Council is regarded as the most

promising yet toward raising the necessary funds and meeting the conditions outlined by the First LDS Presidency to save the building. The tract of land in question is expected to bring at least \$20,000, Mr. Hatch said. In fact, he revealed, a firm offer for at least that much has already been received.

He outlined the financial picture as follows: Needed to save the building by providing money for another site on which to build a proposed stake center and two-ward chapel, \$60,000.

Now Available

Already available, about \$8,000 in a Heber City bank from public fund drive thus far, and \$15,000 which will go toward the site from sale of tennis courts

on the same block back to the city by the church (the church previously paid this amount to the city when it acquired that portion of the block).

Thus, said Mr. Hatch, if Heber City can contribute about \$35,000 through the tennis court property and the tract it proposes to sell, this plus the \$8000 on hand makes \$43,000 and leaves only \$17,000 of the necessary \$60,000. However, he said, some \$2000 will be needed immediately for necessary repairs and restoration, so some \$19,000 to \$20,000 must be raised.

Extension Given

He told the group that despite a recent announcement from the First LDS Presidency giving Stake President Harold Call permission to tear the building

down, First LDS Counselor Hugh B. Brown had later granted an extension if the preservation committee could show immediate results toward conditions for saving the building.

Wasatch Stake leaders planned to tear the building down and construct a new stake center on the site. A citizens committee seeks to prevent this, and church leaders have told the former they must provide another site. The only one available and acceptable to local church authorities costs \$60,000.

Architect Fred Markham told the Provo group that the Heber Tabernacle is structurally sound, and that he had discovered "nothing that paint and repairs won't take care of."

Fund Drive

Leaders are continuing a fund drive toward the necessary amount. Donors are asked to send contributions to: Save The Tabernacle Fund, First Security Bank, Heber City, Utah. Those in charge pledge that the money will be held in trust until the success or failure of the drive is determined. If it cannot be used to save the building, all money will be returned to

donors.

Don Barker, Heber businessman, is general chairman of the preservation committee.

Committees are now working on plans for practical uses of the building if it can be saved. Suggestions thus far include a combination civic and entertainment center, with museum aspects.

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DESERET NEWS, Tuesday, June 22, 1965



Tabernacle Cleanup

Don Barker pours hot water for Barbara McDonald as Heber City citizens turn out to clean up the old Wasatch Stake Tabernacle, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Thirty persons swept, painted, scrubbed, polished, washed and vacuumed to prepare the pioneer structure for a special show Wednesday.

6 Sunday Herald

SUNDAY, JUNE 13, 1965
Utah County, Utah

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Save Heber Tabernacle

I admire your newspaper for bringing to our attention that there are many citizens who are actively opposing the destruction of one of Utah's best preserved and historic old buildings—the Heber Tabernacle.

I have visited Heber City and looked at the unique structure which had a sign below the steeple saying "Erected A.D. 1889." Then I visited the Wave Publishing Co. and saw in early issues of the Wasatch Wave the important part this edifice played in the history of Heber Valley. Wasatch County needs a cultural center. Heber Valley needs a tourist attraction. The State of Utah and the Mormon Church can ill afford to lose this piece of history.

It would have been just as senseless for the people of Boston to have destroyed the old North Church when it no longer served as a religious edifice, as to let this building fall under the wrecker's ball.

I urge you citizens of Utah—go look at the Heber Tabernacle and learn about its history. Then contact the Save the Heber Tabernacle Committee to learn their proposed utilization of the structure, and you will do what I did—join the forces striving to save the Heber Tabernacle before it's too late.

—WILLIAM S. JORDAN
2824 E. 21st South

June 10/15/65